

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

15 June 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT : Internal Security Situation in Peru

1. In response to your request, we have prepared an estimate of the internal security situation in Peru, as follows.

2. Generally speaking the military regime of President Velasco has had no outstanding problems of public order since the coup of October 1968. Political tensions in Peru have risen from time to time as the government has moved forward with its measures to reduce the influence of the economic and social elites that formerly dominated the country. But there has been little or no overt or violent resistance to military rule. Now even political tensions have temporarily been stilled in the wake of the disaster. The populace is united behind the government in seeking ways to bring relief to the stricken areas, and the government in turn is seeking as much foreign assistance as it can obtain.

3. The Velasco government has in the past emphasized the need to greatly reduce the dependence of Peru on the US and the influence of US officials and business interests in Peru. It has permitted -- at times encouraged -- a high level of anti-US propaganda. The military regime has resented what it considers to be a hostile attitude by the US Government toward Peruvian plans to modernize and revolutionize the country. But none of this has been permitted to get out of hand; with but one or two minor exceptions, neither US installations nor US citizens have suffered physical attacks. President Velasco has publicly welcomed US offers of assistance for disaster relief, and the Peruvians have generally been profuse in their expressions of gratitude for US Government and private aid.

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4. In these circumstances we believe that any US dignitaries who visit Peru in connection with disaster relief would be well received as the guests of the regime and the nation. The US visitors would probably be escorted for a good part of their visit by Peruvian officials of high rank. Considerable effort would be made to deter and quash any incidents that could endanger or seriously embarrass the US visitors. The word would go out to all groups that the dignity and welfare of Peru were at stake in the visit, and that any attempt at hostile action would bring the wrath of the government down on the perpetrators.

5. The Peruvian security forces are relatively professional and competent by Latin American standards (though considerably less capable and experienced [redacted] in protecting important visitors). Though the Velasco government has used radical advisors in some positions, and encouraged Communist Party activity in labor, the security forces are in the charge of professional military and police officials who are loyal to Velasco and hostile toward what they consider political extremism.

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6. The Velasco regime has generally eliminated the close relationships between Peruvian and US officials that characterized earlier periods. But we believe that Velasco would agree to suggestions for cooperation between US and Peruvian security officials for a visit as appropriate, and that such collaboration would probably proceed relatively smoothly. The Peruvians would probably balk, however, at arrangements that indicated that US rather than Peruvian officials were in charge.

7. Peruvian cooperation might extend to the point of preventive arrest for a number of suspected troublemakers and known anti-US agitators. In any case, as we have indicated, the regime would not permit any organized anti-US demonstrations. There might be some

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placard-waving and name-calling by small groups, but pro-Soviet Communist organizations, for example, would be loathe to cross the Peruvian Government on an issue that could end official tolerance and encouragement of their labor activities. Soviet officials would similarly not wish to endanger their recently-established presence in Peru. Several splinter Communist groups would not be under such constraints, but they lack the organization and support to promote large-scale disturbances.

8. In summary, we believe that visiting US dignitaries would receive a polite and respectful -- and even a warm -- welcome. There is little danger of hostile action from large organized groups, and the Peruvian security forces would probably cope effectively with minor disturbances. We cannot of course rule out a violent act by an individual psychopath or by a small group of terrorists.

/s/ Richard Helms

Richard Helms
Director

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